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ABSTRACT

The Bibliotherapy Project, originally located at Agnews State Hospital, was transferred to the Santa Clara County Library in 1972 since the state of California announced the closing of the Hospital to the mentally ill. Most patients were returned to the community, where the County would provide the services formerly provided by the state. The new setting was different from the hospital situation; there was a wide variety in the type of the clientele and facility served. The use of a greater variety of materials, more frequent coordinating efforts, and a prolonged contact with the same clientele were necessary measures to readjust the program to the changed conditions. The emotionally disturbed patients in the community were located through the various agencies and assisted through the use of various library materials and discussion groups. The success of the program was reflected not only by the response of the clientele but also by the support of the community to continue the program under County Revenue Sharing Funds. (CH)

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BIBLIOTHERAPY PROJECT FINAL REPORT

Community Phase

April, 1972 - Sept., 1973

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The Santa Clara County Library as indicated in this report entered officially as a participant to the Bibliotherapy Project in mid-stream, really serving in the capacity of fiscal agent and operating base to an on-going program.

When it was definite that funding under LSCA would not be available beyond the funds already allotted, the library administration submitted a proposal for Revenue Sharing Funds to the Board of Supervisors to continue the program at the same level.

In all honesty, I think most of us felt this to be an exercise. Suddenly, the public, aware of the important successes of this program, came forward to urge Board support. Letters literally poured in to individual Board members, the County Executive, and the County Librarian. It became apparent that Bibliotherapy had indeed made an impact on the community.

It is certainly a pleasure to report that the program continues under County Revenue Sharing Funds. This continuation alone is the greatest tribute to the success of the Bibliotherapy Program.

BIBLIOTHERAPY FINAL REPORT
April, 1972 - Sept., 1973

General Purpose:

The overall goal of the bibliotherapy program is to assist in the rehabilitation of mentally handicapped persons through the use of library materials.

Implementation:

At various residential and community centers, the mentally ill of Santa Clara County are made aware of library resources through reading and discussion groups, individual reader guidance, assistance in using the library, and preparation of individual bibliographies for slow readers to aid in the enhancement of self concept and personal insight.

Since the level of impairment, education, mobility, and intellectual ability is very wide, specific goals for each facility served varies according to the composition of the group. Assistance in the formation of specific goals is through regular consultation with facility staff.

There is an attempt to build each bibliotherapy session on emerging group interests. Clients are encouraged to relate their needs and interests to the bibliotherapist, who then locates material that will stimulate a relevant discussion. Much literature searching is necessary to find suitable material. The clientele has varied from age 8 to 80 and from dull-normal intelligence to very bright.

Materials used have been: realia, such as hand puppets, shells, fossils, rocks, seeds, models, dishes, pictures, clay; song lyrics; records; magazine and newspaper articles; short stories; plays; poetry; novels; fables; folk tales; picture books; movies and slides;

pamphlets; maps; and displays (at the library). Other forms of bibliotherapy have been trips to the library and art gallery, presentation of material by clients, picnics, and attendance at dress rehearsals of plays.

In one bibliotherapy session, the material chosen was the geographic history of the Pinnacles National Park. The account of the volcanic eruptions and shifts in the earth's crust was enhanced by the fact that the bibliotherapy session was held at the Pinnacles, followed by a hike.

Three library school students have given time to literature search in connection with work-study programs. One bibliotherapist guided and counseled these students in the art of bibliotherapy, and lectured on three occasions to library classes at San Jose State University. We feel that it would be desirable to have a unit of study on bibliotherapy at library schools in order to further the use of this therapeutic technique.

Arrangements were made with the university drama department for a group of clients to view a dress rehearsal of Thornton Wilder's OUR TOWN and a melodrama THE DEMON DRINK. Discussion after the plays was lively and far-reaching. On another occasion, a group watched SPLENDOR IN THE GRASS by William Inge on television, and later read the play together.

The cooperation of the librarian in allowing books to be loaned for an extended period makes it possible for clients, who are able, to assist in choosing books at one facility. Clients unable to go to the library thus have library materials available to them.

Prior to April, 1972, the Bibliotherapy Project was located at Agnew State Hospital, San Jose, California. Late in 1971, the State

of California announced final plans for the closing of the Hospital to the mentally ill, which were to be effected by June, 1972. Most of the patients were to be returned to the communit , where the County would provide the services formerly being provided by the State. The phasing-out program began in February, 1972, but the Bibliotherapy Project continued at Agnews with the remaining patients until it was transferred to the Santa Clara County Library at the request of Assistant State Librarian, Mrs. Phyllis Dalton.

On April 1, 1972, the two bibliotherapists transferred their "desks" to the Santa Clara County Library to begin the new phase of bibliotherapy with the emotionally disturbed located in the community. They also continued to serve the patients that were still at Agnews State Hospital. Until the last week of June, 1972, there were still enough patients at Agnews who were utilizing the bibliotherapy service to warrant the continuance of the program there. The continuity could be maintained as the patients were returned to the community, and the visiting of former Agnews patients now in the community provided the opportunity for new contacts.

In order to locate the emotionally disturbed patients in the community, as much time as could be spared was devoted to conferences with the following:

1. The Santa Clara County Mental Health Director and staff.
2. The Santa Clara County Social Services Agency - appropriate staff.
3. The supervisors, therapists, and recreation personnel of board and care homes, psychiatric hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, and volunteer organizations, etc.

4. Lay directors of church organizations with a program for the emotionally disturbed.

5. And other similar groups and agencies.

By the latter part of June, 1972, group discussions had been started as replacements for the Agnews groups that were now phased out.

After 18 months of work in the community with a variety of mentally handicapped persons, some differences from the hospital situation are apparent. There is a wide range in the type of facility served. In one, such as a board and care home, there may be little or no emphasis on rehabilitation. The residents may receive no encouragement to attend or participate in bibliotherapy. The staff may be untrained para-professionals, others function only to cook meals and supervise chores. Often, these persons are unfamiliar with, and uninterested in, any therapeutic technique. In such cases, the task of establishing and holding weekly bibliotherapy groups is difficult, sometimes impossible. We must locate each individual client, frequently having to go to his room. Meanwhile, other residents who are interested in participating in bibliotherapy, often become impatient with the delay, and wander off.

On the other hand, we often work with staff who are well trained, and knowledgeable in the theories and techniques of psychotherapy. When this happens, bibliotherapy may become highly integrated into the program of the facility in question, with frequent communication with the staff on such matters as materials to be used, or the specific problems and needs of individual clients. In each case, we must adjust ourselves and the bibliotherapy program to these conditions.

There is more variety of response, from very high motivation to

apathy, than at the hospital. There is a wider range of age in clients served. A home for emotionally disturbed children requested our services. It is necessary to use a greater variety of material because of a more stable population. The short attention span of the very elderly and the children has necessitated the use of more realia, and the planning of sessions around a particular theme, in contrast to the more open-minded sessions.

Occasionally, when we first contact a facility and begin a new group, the response may be quite minimal. But in those cases where the population of the group is stable over a period of time, slowly but surely the level of participation improves; the response becomes more relaxed and spontaneous, more honest and constructive.

We account for this in two ways. First, we have the opportunity to vary the material and approach. Second, a prolonged contact with the same individuals enables us to establish a rapport; a comfortable, relaxed relationship with the members of the group. In these ways, we can encourage the response of individuals as well as the group as a whole.

More staff meetings are necessary because more staff is involved in coordinating the program at each facility. More time is involved in transportation; the staff is isolated, no longer are we members of a therapeutic community with a definite identity.

Many unsolicited bouquets were tossed our way for these unique library services. Because these remarks were spontaneously given, a few will be quoted here to illustrate the generally favorable response bibliotherapy has elicited from the community.

Bob - "I remember everything you have read. I told AA down south about bibliotherapy. That story about Bea and Lil helped

keep me sober."

Psychiatric nurse - "I never dreamed you could get a group of patients to respond is such a short time to three poems. How do you find your material?"

John - "It's surprising how you can see yourself in those characters. This would be good for anyone." (Referring to play reading.)

Mike - "I couldn't follow the story. What's the point of doing this?"

Dennis - "I'm leaving tomorrow, but I got permission to come back to your (bibliotherapy) group next week."

Half-way house supervisor - "Bibliotherapy is a very important part of our program. You have reached people that no one else has reached."

Permission to use the remaining funds in the Bibliotherapy grant beyond the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 1973) made it possible to continue the bibliotherapy services through October, 1973. Meanwhile, attempts were being made to secure funding for the balance of the fiscal year 1973-1974. Bibliotherapy was included in the perliminary County Library budget, but the finance officer would not allow any new programs to be added. Applications for revenue sharing funds were submitted to the City of San Jose and the County of Santa Clara. No funds were available from the City of San Jose.

Rehabilitation facilities apprised of the impending demise of bibliotherapy services responded with many letters of praise and requests for the continuation of the program. For example, one client in a convalescent-psychiatric hospital wrote a letter to the County Executive's office, and also had friends circulate a petition in her church requesting that the program be continued as the one

mind-expanding activity available to patients. The editor of the Board and Care Newsletter mentioned the therapeutic value of reading and the intellectually stimulating aspects of bibliotherapy. As a result, the County Board of Supervisors has granted revenue sharing funds to continue the Bibliotherapy Project for another year.

With interpretation and guidance, the library can serve almost everybody. Making the mentally handicapped aware of the resources of literature and other library materials through reading and discussion groups continues to be the focus of the Bibliotherapy Project in the community, as it was at Agnews State Hospital.

FACILITIES SERVED
April, 1972 to Sept., 1973

Facility, Description	Bibliotherapy Goals	Level of Participation	Number of Sessions	Total No. of Participants
Adolescent Day Center, emotional & adjustment problems, M & F, 10-19	Socialization, insight, alternative adaptive behavior, library use	Fair to good, staff disinterested	3	23
Adolescent Residential Center, emotional & adjustment problems, M, 14-20	Insight, alternative adaptive behavior, individual reading	Hostile to enthusiastic	22	144
Alcoholic convalescence, M & F, 20-60	Socialization, insight, alternative adaptive behavior, individual reading	Moderate to enthusiastic staff interested	32	93
Half-way house for alcholics, M & F, All ages	Socialization, insight, intellectual stimulation, alternative adaptive behavior, library use	Lethargic to interested, staff disinterested	6	38
Board and care for alcoholics, M, 30+	Socialization, intellectual stimulation	Poor to moderate, staff uncooperative	3	12
Alcoholic rehabilitation drop-in center M & F, 19-60	Socialization, insight, alternative adaptive behavior, library use	Lethargic to enthusiastic, staff enthusiastic	46	387
Alcoholic rehabilitation, F, 25-55	Socialization, insight, alternative adaptive behavior, use of library	Interested	1	7
Alcoholic rehabilitation, F, 25-55	Socialization, alternative adaptive behavior, insight, library use	Enthusiastic	1	6
Home for emotionally disturbed children, M, 8-11	Socialization, alternative adaptive behavior, insight, library use	Enthusiastic, scheduling problems	4	40
Psychiatric hospital, M & F, 18-70	Socialization, insight, intellectual stimulation, alternative adaptive behavior, self-actualization, individual reading	Moderate to excellent	55	403
Convalescent and psychiatric hospital, M & F, aged	Socialization, intellectual stimulation, individual reading	Lethargic to enthusiastic, staff cooperative	57	457

Facility, Description	Bibliotherapy Goals	Level of Participation	Number of Sessions	Total No. of Participants
Alternative to hospitalization facility, M & F, 20-40	Socialization, insight, library use, alternative adaptive behavior, self-accualization	Moderate to extreme enthusiasm, excellent staff cooperation	142	1181
Half-way house, M & F, 18-50	Socialization, insight, intellectual stimulation, library use, alternative adaptive behavior, self-actualization	Interested, enthusiastic, excellent staff cooperation	45	400
Day treatment, post hospitalization, M & F, 18-40	Socialization, insight, library use, alternative adaptive behavior, self-actualization	Moderate to excellent, scheduling problems, staff disinterested	8	134
Alternative to hospitalization, 1st schizophrenic experience only, M & F, 15-25	Socialization, insight, intellectual stimulation, self-actualization	Poor to moderate	8	15
Board and care home, M, 20-70	Socialization, intellectual stimulation,	Moderate to excellent, staff disinterested	58	239
Board and care, M & F, 20-70	Socialization, insight, intellectual stimulation, library use	Moderate to enthusiastic	36	222
Drop-in center for board and care residents, M & F, 30-50	Socialization, library use, self-expression	Lethargic to uninterested, staff cooperative	64	469
Drug rehabilitation residence center, M & F, 18-40	Insight, alternative adaptive behavior, self-actualization, library use	Very enthusiastic staff disinterested	23	285
Drug rehabilitation residence center, M & F, 15-17	Insight, library use, alternative adaptive behavior	Hostile to extreme enthusiasm, staff disinterested	18	150
Convalescent hospital, M & F, aged	Socialization, intellectual stimulation individual reading	Lethargic, staff disinterested	3	31
Santa Clara County Mental Health Center, Staff	To demonstrate the technique of bibliotherapy	Interested	1	16
Santa Clara County Mental Health Center, North County, Staff	To demonstrate the technique of bibliotherapy	Interested	1	12